

LEONARD OFFERS TO GIVE TWENTY POUNDS TO FIGHT M. O'DOWD

Lightweight Champion Willing to Battle Mike at 154 Pounds Just to Show St. Paul Knockers That He

Is No Slicker; Plestina Finds Himself at Last.

BY RINGSIDE.

Chicago, Dec. 29.—"If Mike O'Dowd, who now claims the middleweight championship, will make 154 pounds for me, I'll box him 10 rounds. This goes for him merely because he claims the championship. I have no desire to annex any more titles, but I certainly will never again battle a man who is smaller than I am."

This was the statement made by Benny Leonard, lightweight champion, after his bout with Gene Delmont in St. Paul recently.

Leonard was crying mad at the time. The St. Paul crowd had "boomed" him after the Delmont match because they insisted he outweighed Delmont from 10 to 15 pounds. That was not true, but because of Delmont's short stature he looked like a midjet beside the champion.

Billy Gibson, Leonard's manager, following the articles of agreement to the letter, had the champion weigh in at 3 o'clock in the office of the boxing commission's physician. He thought that was all that was necessary. The commission, it seems, demands public weighing. The physician said Leonard weighed 134½ pounds. Delmont weighed 130½ pounds, publicly.

"It is distasteful to be treated as I was in St. Paul," said Leonard. "I am through with that town. Please say for me, too, that Delmont is the last little fellow I will ever box. Mind you, the match was not of my picking at all. We offered to box in St. Paul and the promoters picked the man. I am sorry we took the thing on at all and I wouldn't have it happen again for 20 times what we received for the contest."

Manager Gibson concurred fully in what Leonard said. He did not consider they had been fairly treated in St. Paul and was especially bitter about the announcement from the ringside that Leonard had not weighed in. This got the champion "in bad" with the crowd right off the reel and the crowd was with Delmont.

That is the situation which brought about the offer to box O'Dowd. "Certainly that goes," said Gibson. "O'Dowd seems to be recognized as middleweight champion since he whipped Al McCoy and if he will do 154 pounds Ben will box him."

Story of Plestina.
The story of Marin Plestina, a Slav wrestler of Omaha, is the story of a man who found himself after many trials and tribulations. It is a real story of what sincere and painstaking training will do.

When Plestina was around Chicago several years ago he was nothing but a fat, chubby kid, with a decidedly red face that looked as if it might burst at any moment under the strain of one severe hold upon any portion of his anatomy. He could wrestle a little, but he could not stay. He was much too fat.

Coming to Omaha.
Plestina went out to Omaha and placed himself in the hands of "Farm" Burns. The latter is a great taskmaster as a trainer. He knows instantly when a man cheats in his work. So Plestina couldn't cheat. He had to train or be fired out by Burns. In a year it took much time to remove the "tumor" already mentioned. Plestina was a vastly different man. He was a well conditioned athlete.

Today Plestina weighs 214 pounds, every ounce of it is worth something to him in an athletic way. The loss of more than 30 pounds of fat was just what he needed. His friends think he is a real champion and think he would have proved it recently in Omaha in his match with Joe Stecher, but a Nebraska referee spoiled it all. Because Plestina wouldn't give Stecher a hold, or something of that sort, the referee declared Stecher the winner. It was a raw deal, one of the very rawest in a game noted for such things. Plestina was standing on his feet at the time and not even one of his shoulders had scraped the mat.

Brennan Fans Happy.
Chicago admirers of Bill Brennan, the North Side lad who had to go east to get a reputation, are jubilant because of a recent victory scored by Brennan over Homer Smith, the Benton Harbor, Mich., heavyweight. Sam Langford said Smith is good enough to beat Fred Fulton, and since Brennan beat Smith, his admirers assert Bill is the leading candidate for Jess Willard's crown.

One thing Brennan owns that is an asset to any scrapper is a punch. Just about two-thirds of his bouts have ended in a knockout, and not all of Brennan's victims have been "dubs."

Brennan could not plant a knockout on Smith, but he had the big Michigan man on the defensive throughout and slightly groggy at the finish. Smith is by no means a novice in the ring game, although he lacks experience, and Brennan's victory over him places the Chicago scrapper pretty well up in the ranks of the heavies.

Although he was eager to win, Smith is not discouraged over his defeat by Brennan and attributes it to over anxiety, which led him to train until he became stale. Smith believes he can beat Brennan if given another chance, and it is probable the men may be rematched.

Minnesota's Only Tank
Star III; Gloom in Camp

George Gibbs, the only veteran swimmer the University of Minnesota had this year, has been compelled to give up work because of the effects of an attack of diphtheria, which left him too weak for competition. No other candidate has appeared who can fill Gibbs' place in the dashes and decide whether the University will give up work because of the effects of an attack of diphtheria, which left him too weak for competition. No other candidate has appeared who can fill Gibbs' place in the dashes and decide whether the University will give up work because of the effects of an attack of diphtheria, which left him too weak for competition.

PHIL FANS FURIOUS AT SALE OF GREAT ALEX; BLACKLIST THREAT AS THEY SHOUT "UNFAIR"

Trade of Star Battery to Cubs Rousses Peaceful Village and Baker's Resignation Is Demanded.

Philadelphia, Dec. 29.—"We've got nothing left in Philadelphia to sell but the Liberty bell and the statue of William Penn," is the cry of local base ball fans. That's the way they feel in this town over the sale of Grover Cleveland Alexander and William (Red) Killifer to the Cubs.

"Martial law is declared here," said a prominent base ball editor, in discussing President William F. Baker's "boner" in selling one of the greatest batteries in the history of base ball. "Yes, martial law is on, for the citizens of this peaceful village are walking around with knives in their teeth," added the B. E.

Philadelphia fans are up in arms and they are going to blacklist the National league team here next season.

May Force Resignation.

The sale of Alexander and Killifer is to Philadelphia what the sale of Matty and Bresnahan would have been to New York fans 10 years ago. These Quakers are nice, quiet persons as a rule, but they are riled now, and nothing but Baker's resignation from local base ball will save the Philadelphia club.

Local newspapers are supporting the fans in their fight against Baker. One of the leading evening papers printed the following:

"You pop-eyed bugs who gather in the grandstand and bleachers of the Philadelphia National league base ball park pay the freight, you support the club, you furnish the salaries, you pay the dividends and if the sale of Alexander and Killifer was a raw deal, you are to suffer. William F. Baker, president of the club, says the trade is a splendid one. It is supposed the price paid was \$75,000.75, the 75 cents representing Prendergast and Dillhoefer, the players received in the barter. Now, you fans have your own ideas on this matter, so just sit down with pen in hand and let your views be known."

Baker's excuse for the sale of Alexander and Killifer is that he must retreat. The magnate claims the offer was altogether too tempting, from a business standpoint, to ignore. Then, again, Baker declared that, besides the profit from the sale, the Philadelphia club will benefit because it won't have to pay Alexander's \$12,000 yearly salary.

Baker's Salary \$15,000.
"But Baker gets a salary of \$15,000 as president" is the Philly fan's comeback. "Surely he is not worth \$3,000 more than Alex," in fact, right now Baker is worth a bad nickel, in the estimation of the local base ball followers.

Pat Moran, the manager, isn't saying a word. He can't afford to. But the good-natured Irishman is up against it so hard that nothing but a miracle can keep his team in the race next year. He has a few new players coming for his outfit next year, but chances are remote for landing any real stars.

For catchers he has Eddie Burns, Jack Adams and Dillhoefer. His pitchers are Rixey, Bender, Oeschger, Mayer, Lavender and Henry, of last year. Prendergast from the Cubs; Davis, a right-hander from Louisville, and Woodward, a right-hander from New Haven.

Luderus, Niehoff, Bancroft, Stock, Duguey and McGaffigan are the old infielders, with Brandell, the University of Michigan shortstop, and Pearce, who played a few games last year after being procured from Richmond, among the new ones.

Outfield Is Intact.
The old outfield is intact with Cravath, Schulte, Paskert and Whitted still on the payroll. Mussel of Los Angeles and Fitzgerald were discovered by Wade Killifer, Bill's brother, who is playing on the coast. "Bud" Weiser is back again after a sojourn in the grass belt, and is said to be a very much improved player.

It may be that Baker figures he can succeed where Connie Mack, base ball's shrewdest manager, tried and failed. For three long, weary years the Athletics' port owner and manager has discovered that the job was not an easy one. Connie has tried out hundreds of players from all leagues and every college, yet he hasn't the combination to offer in 1918 that can be considered even a first division prospect.

It is whispered here that Baker is going to quit base ball and that Jim Gaffney is going to be the next owner of the Phillies. This change undoubtedly would be welcomed by local fans, but whether or not Gaffney purchases the club, it will be a wise move on Baker's part to himself and his interests to some other village.

Lajoie Boosts Toronto
As Big League Ball Town

"Toronto, as a base ball city, is good enough for any league," says Napoleon Lajoie, who managed the champion Maple Leaf team this year.

"We played to great crowds in Toronto last season in spite of the fact that the city has been terrifically hit by the war, worse than any other city on this side of the Atlantic ocean."

"The war did not keep our attendance down, and if we could play in a strong league next year we would be sure to repeat. But I doubt if the International league will open. There are several club owners in that circuit who do not feel like going down into their pockets again. Toronto ought to be in the American league in place of Washington."

Cuban Ball Players
To Invade the U. S.

If the draft makes inroads on ball teams, it is said that there will be a wholesale invasion of America by Cuban ball players who will seek places on major and minor league teams.

Cuba has declared war against Germany, but has not formed a conscripted army, and its citizens would be permitted to play base ball in the United States without interference.

Cuba has more and better ball players than any country outside of the United States and is in a position to fill the gaps on teams caused by the draft.

Earl Caddock in Kakhi



EARL CADDOCK

BOXING IS MOST PRIMITIVE

Fighters Enter Ring to Ruin Opponent; Foot Ball's End Same, But Aim Different

OF AMERICAN MAJOR SPORTS

In its essence, boxing is our most primitive sport. It is conducted on the frank hypothesis that it is often possible—and desirable for one man of given weight to temporarily wreck the train of thoughts of another gentleman, of equal poundage. This, to be sure, is not presented as the mission of boxing to a threatening state legislature.

Let the bewildered lawmakers turn their backs and you and I have little use for anyone except the baby with the knockout punch. Of course we can't remember their names overnight. They make us yawn. They simply won't do. Benny Leonard need never worry over our personal support so long as he can connect with that narcotic right.

Foot Ball Is Different.
Foot ball is not like prize fighting. Foot ball presumes only to move an oval, inflated pigskin from one end of the field to another. If at times it is necessary to use force—as it often is—in the promotion of successful play, it must be remembered that strength is prerequisite in all forms of athletic exercise. This does not include auction pinocle.

But foot ball does not aim to maim. It is fair and above board, and many of our real hard pugilists, who talk out of the side of their mouths, could probably endure one foot ball period of 12 minutes. At the end of that time he would inquire how the grandstand happened to fall on him.

A rude prize fighter goes into the ring attired in a pair of tights decorated with the flag of the United States. The recent paucity of flags was caused by the second and third rate boxers, who have them stitched to their battling trunks.

ARMY CALL STOPS BRILLIANT FUTURE

Cadore, First Season Out in Big League, Shows Great Promise, But Uncle Sam Interferes.

One of those upon whom the burden of war has fallen hardest is Sergeant Leon J. Cadore, late of the Brooklyn Dodgers.

When he was called to arms this enterprising young man had just finished his first season in the big show. He was just entering upon what was almost sure to be a successful career, when it was cut at the bud by the beckoning hand of Uncle Sam.

There are few pitchers in the game who can look back and point to a better first season than Cadore's. He won 13 games and lost as many with a team that finished seventh, a team that was crippled most all the season, and in which the germ of dissatisfaction had played havoc.

During the 1917 campaign, Cadore pitched six games against the Philadelphia and Pittsburgh teams and won them all.

But against the New York and Cincinnati clubs he pitched six games and lost them all. While he shows how uncertain are the ways of the game.

His record against seven opposing teams follows:

	Won.	Lost.
Philadelphia	3	0
Pittsburgh	2	0
Cincinnati	0	4
New York	0	6
Boston	2	3
St. Louis	1	2
Chicago	1	2

Aside from the rights and the flag the boxer appears as nature delivered him, barring a pair of tin ears which he accomplished himself. He is then ready to receive and give whatever punishment is necessary for the occasion, and the average spectator trusts it is much. On his stomach, jaw, nose and eyes his opponent strikes, if possible, with a five-ounce padded glove. It is a brutalizing spectacle and often inspires a ringsider to screech: "Why don't you kiss him?"

A foot ball player does not aim to give or receive punishment. He is interested only in moving the ball forward for the honor of dear old Princeton and to protect the box of bon hons he bet his girl that dear old Yaton would win.

Pads and More Pads.
Consequently he appears clad in a pair of 10-pound moleskin trousers and a jersey, beneath which are shoulder and chest pads, stomach pads, hip pads, shin pads and elbow pads, while his knees, ankles and wrists are bound with heavy tape. On his head he wears a heavy leather helmet and over his nose a rubber guard.

He wears heavy shoes with out-sticking sharp leather cleats, though no method has been found to make them sharp enough to penetrate a rubber nose guard. But America is inventive.

The foot ball player, thus attired, is ready for anything, and, if possible, his opponents do not disappoint him. He usually mislays his wind in the first period and the visiting team is always ready to deprive him of the remainder of his health in the other three spasms.

But in its essence boxing is our most primitive sport.

FITZ'S SIGN STILL ADORNS OLD SHOP

"Bob Fitzsimmons, Blacksmith," Is Sign Over Establishment on Main Street of Timaru, New Zealand.

While the memory of the late Bob Fitzsimmons will hardly be erased from the mind of the sporting public for a long time in the United States, it is also being kept fresh in the minds of the people who inhabit the antipodes. A citizen of New York walking down the main street of Timaru, New Zealand, would perhaps be startled to read the sign "Bob Fitzsimmons, Blacksmith," above one of the structures that line that thoroughfare.

According to an account from New Zealand, the proprietor of this blacksmith shop, an old Irishman, has for years conducted the place, and will not remove the sign which Fitz put up when he started in business at that same spot.

Timaru is the place where Fitz broke into the boxing game. Jim Mace, the departed, who was formerly champion of England, put Fitzsimmons on while the Mace fistic combination was showing in the town. He whipped all his opponents, and from that night on proved himself a fighter with a knockout punch. He was amateur middleweight champion of Australia back in the early '80s.

There has always been some doubt about Fitz's age. Parson Charles E. Davies went to England to look up Fitz's birth record at Helston, Cornwall, England, and found that he was a son of a village policeman and wife, who were highly respected in the town.

DICKERSON HITS BUMPS IN ROAD ON SEARCH FOR NEW WESTERN TERRITORY

Western League Prexie Finds Oklahoma and Illinois Cities Not So Coy As They Were Earlier in the Month; Old Man Optimism Bobs Into View; Hang Crepe on Lincoln.

All is not smooth sailing on the base ball sea for the Western league.

When the Western moguls staged their merry little confab at St. Joseph the first of this month, it was agreed the Western loop should pluck two more cities from the fertile and untended fields of Oklahoma or Illinois and President Dickerson was dispatched on a gumshoeing tour to these states.

SEND OUT S. O. S.

At that time, base ball prospects in Oklahoma and Illinois were slim. The Western association had been torpedoed and was sinking fast. The Central league was floundering on the rocks and its S. O. S. calls for aid were unanswered.

Peoria, Bloomington and Rockford in Illinois, and Oklahoma City and Tulsa, in Oklahoma, were directing flirtatious glances at the Western magnates and the latter flirted back and Dickerson started on his journey.

But now, alas for the Western moguls, the Oklahoma and Illinois villages are not so coy. Apparently they have recalled mamma's sage advice not to flirt with strangers.

Suspect Double.

Down in Oklahoma, the petroleum wonders have a hunch that they are being double crossed. Dickerson first visited Oklahoma City and Tulsa and these villages gave out the word that their admittance to the Western league had been practically settled.

It is probable the oil towns in their enthusiasm became a little bit excited and previous and they just thought it was practically settled. But when Dickerson bobbed up over in Illinois, the Soomers became peevish and decided Dickie had been kidding them.

So the Oklahomans have started talk of reviving the Western association. The Western association is Class D. The D stands for dead. The Western association is so dead the pulmonary manufacturer wouldn't revive it. But the Oklahomans haven't discovered this. As in every base ball league optimism prevails—especially at this time of the year, when they aren't losing money every day.

So the Oklahomans are kicking a bit.

Bloomington Lies Down.

Now for Illinois. Bloomington officially has given up hope. Bloomington was climbing toward altitudes too far in the air, anyhow. It is a Class B town and has no business trying to put on Class A airs.

When the Bloomington gents got to figuring it up they could see more money going out than coming in, so they are trying to stir up the deceased Central. They may succeed. If they do the Western will be unable to break into Peoria or Rockford.

It is said, too, that Peoria has cooled in its attitude toward the Western and will stick to the ship if there is a chance to resuscitate the Central.

Kidding Themselves.

Thus is Mr. Dickerson encountering little irregularities in the road he is traveling. To our way of thinking, the Oklahoma and Illinois parties are kidding themselves when they hope to pull their respective leagues through next year. Their own cities may deliver the patronage and thus the iron men, but the other towns upon which they depend will sink to the bottom of the shaft long before Independence day rolls around. The Western has a good chance to last until August anyway and things may break better after that.

So in the long run it is a good guess that Oklahoma City and Tulsa and Peoria and Rockford and, perhaps, Bloomington, all will be clamoring for those vacant berths in the Western league. But their benighted optimism may so delay the clamoring that the Western will have to shake a nifty leg to get away to any kind of a start in the spring.

The Western, however, will start, Oklahoma or no Oklahoma and Illinois or no Illinois. The Dickerson loop will start with six clubs if necessary, or even with only four. But it will start.

Ducky on His Way.

Ducky Holmes down at Lincoln, has packed his suit case, thrown in the extra necktie and a couple of collars and gone calling. Ducky is looking for a place to light.

Lincoln is out of the question. The Links almost passed out of the picture last summer and Ducky had to go into the baby's bank to pay the league dues.

Now that Ducky is in distress the Lincoln business interests refused to aid, averring that professional base ball is a private enterprise, is not a matter of civic pride and does not do the town any good.

Oh, My No.

Of course not. If a town boasts a professional base ball town, it is a live one. If it doesn't, set it down among the cut and bleedings. Its last spark of life was snuffed out when the ball team blew.

So Holmes is looking for a place to check his suit case and his ball club, such as it is. Sioux City is casting caggy glances at Ducky and Holmes may find that city a harbor of refuge. At any rate Holmes has joined Hughie Jones and Jack Holland and it has become the "wandering trio" instead of the "vagabond duo."

As things stand now the Western league will line up in the spring in one of the following ways:

Omaha	Omaha
Des Moines	Des Moines
St. Joseph	St. Joseph
Sioux City	Sioux City
Lincoln	Lincoln
Wichita	Wichita
Oklahoma City	Oklahoma City
Tulsa	Tulsa
Peoria	Peoria
Rockford	Rockford
Bloomington	Bloomington

SPORT CARNIVAL FOR NEW YEAR'S DAY AT Y.M.C.A.

Junior and Senior Competitions to Be Staged, as Well as Floor Fray and Swimming Exhibition.

Omaha "Y" athletes are on their toes for the annual indoor championship meet which will be staged at the Young Men's Christian association gymnasium New Year's day.

Events for juniors and seniors are scheduled. The juniors will clash in the morning and the seniors at night. The night program also calls for a number of entertaining features. Open house will be held all day at the "Y."

Championships are to be awarded in all events. First, second and third place ribbons will be given. In addition, the three athletes making the highest total of points will be given special recognition.

The junior program of competition calls for running high jump, spring board jump, standing broad jump, running high dive, two-lap race on track and a special relay.

The senior program calls for a two-lap race on track, running high jump, spring board jump, three standing board jumps, running high dive and a special relay.

As a feature event, the leaders in the Commercial and Church basketball leagues will clash. A number of crack "Y" swimmers also will give an exhibition.

TOLL OF DEATH THINS RANKS OF ALL ATHLETICS

(Continued From Page One.)

Of England and America, who died at Portland, Ore., and Frank Gotch, the retired heavyweight champion of the world and a man of marvelous skill on the mat.

Other branches of sport suffered less heavily. October and November saw twelve foot ball players pass along the great trail as a result of injuries received on the gridiron, but they were all amateur, interscholastic or school boy players. Henry Holt-grieve, former world's champion weight lifter, died early in the year, as did Joe Lindley, former world's champion bike rider.

CARD FANS BEGIN TO ROAR ABOUT HORNSBY



ROGERS HORNSBY

The methods of frenzied finance which are being adopted by club owners in the major leagues are already causing much unrest among base ball fans which will have a serious effect on the game next summer. The latest blast from the fans comes from St. Louis, where they will present a petition to President Branch Rickey warning him that if he sells Rogers Hornsby to the Cubs they will not go near the National league park. It is expected that the petition will have more than 50,000 names when present to Rickey.